Jeremy Walton’s Audi TT Sport – 99,600 miles and counting…

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“Closing in on 100,000 miles, our 5-years represents 13,000 miles together.”

In this ninth instalment of his series, Jeremy Walton brings us up to date with the 2024 updates completed on his 19 year old Audi TT quattro sport.

(All words and images © Jeremy Walton).

Jeremy writes… Maintenance-modest, individually stylish and at least depreciation-proof,

following 5 years 6 months ownership, this run out 2006 edition of Audi's TT quattro sport has proved a rewarding buy. Bought with over 85,000 miles registered and now closing fast on 100,000 miles, it has been exceptionally reliable. Since our last instalment, **published July 2024**, my 240bhp TT quattro sport has gathered a total 99,600 miles.



A mixed result, apparent after a most expensive [£683.64] and ironic uprate after our last instalment, was purely self-inflicted. I had earlier refreshed the front suspension with Bilstein struts and replacement Eibach springs: the results were rewarding, both ride quality above 30 mph and control over bumps notably improved. At the time no need was seen to work on the rear suspension, but I grew uneasy with the number of coil spring failures I saw reported on older TTs. By October 2024 I had saved enough to buy the key components; a brace of Bilstein rears cost me £343.64 and a smidge under £100 got me a pair of Sachs-branded coil springs.

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I spent hours online even to get new TT coil springs, never mind those for quattro sport derivative, which are meant to compliment a slightly lower production ride height. Bilstein

actually listed a shorter set for non standard suspension, but I wanted to remain as per production, particularly as sleeping policemen scrape their way into daily use.

I could not get Eibach again, a Sachs dealer had the most detail on their site, listing shorter for lowered suspensions and long for a standard TT qs. I selected the longer set, but the minute Mr Jenkins and I witnessed the hard-won [labour intensive] finished result, sharp intakes of breath. It was jacked up 63.5mm/2.5 inches at the rear, tyre-top-to-wing vertical point. 'Mind the Gap' Measurements that any former saloon car racer like me abhors, mind you the front is not in the low rider category either.

However, there were balancing factors that meant I have left the longer springs on for several months. First there was money and reluctance to ask Peter to go through refits on shorter springs, as rust clearance had hindered progress severely, making the job a tough one. Secondly, something Peter could not see at the time, but which I discovered when I unboxed the 99,475-mile original rear springs. My suspicions were justified: not only were they obviously rust-pitted, but a small section of end coil dropped off in my hand!



The third and final factor is that, despite my reservations, the TT drives with no noticeable quirks on the road: on 50-60 mph bad bumps, dodging pot holes, it is actually improved. At some lower speeds [under 40-45 mph] over poorly surfaced country tarmac, it can get uncomfortable, jiggling like a politician faced with unavoidable facts.

The bittersweet thing was that the other strut-related uprate I thought bound to fail has succeeded way beyond expectations. I risked £10.71, yes that much, on the cynically named ANG RONG [Armstrong copy, presumably] branded pair of support struts for the rear hatch, which had taken to head butting me forcefully in cold weather, or whenever saggy struts

fancied a warmer weather laugh. As months went by, I became wearied of this enough to take an online punt on said ANG RONG. To my astonishment and that of the patient genius that is Pete Jenkins of Auto Services, my go-to automotive and lawn mower maintenance man, the online '*Wrong Uns*' worked fabulously and continue to at this winter writing.

Nearly as expensive [£600] was to trim the remaining worn Alcantara leathers.



I had the original steering wheel trimmed over a year ago and was delighted with the 'New Car' feel it gave. I went back to Piper Trimmers at Vantage Park, now an embryonic classic car site outside Yeovil. The car was there a couple of days and came back with the expected immaculate inserts to the leather Recaro Pole Position race-style seats, plus a replacement

swathe around the gear lever and hand



Owing to estimate misunderstandings the driver's side carpet [worn through at the heel position] was not replaced and a planned estimate for one damaged back panel [I backed into the tow bar and steel surround on the wife's Nissan!] was not forthcoming either.

A more mundane fitment to many [not me] was sourcing and replacing tyres. The Pirelli P Zeroes I had on were a mixed bunch, some predating my original purchase five years ago and I had done plenty for Nerd-status research on the subject, having motorcycle and production car racing experience. Enough to know that those black bits of rubber and clever compounds/construction reinforcements do a bit more than hold fancy wheels off the tarmac.

I settled on a quartet of Michelin Pilot Sport 5s in the production 235/40/18 sizing for a

bal



This TT is slightly odd in that its runs 8 inch width fronts and 8.5 inch rears, but the tyre size is the same front and back, even though Ingolstadt's quattro GmbH engineering and assembly went to the legalised trouble of adding slight rear wing extension pieces. The tyres cost £474 from Black Circles and were delivered rapidly from their Scottish base to a local delivery company. I'm told you can get slightly cheaper prices at Costco, but to me this was already an exceptional price with Michelin online and compulsory listed fitting centre as a tempting alternative. In the fitting event I went to my usual local Checkpoint as they have always treated me exceptionally fairly. True this time as well, but the bill was substantial at £177. To offset, I swiftly sold the old set of Pirellis (pictured) for £100, using Facebook Marketplace.



Reason? After exhaustive—and free—pre-fitting tests had failed to find the cause of a minor, but persistent vibration in the previous Pirelli setup, this time an equally persistent fitter uncovered a slightly buckled wheel. Fortunately that one is a replica, so that has become the spare, wrapped within a worn Pirelli. We also found that an 8.5 inch rim had crept into the front installation, so some worthwhile discoveries were made and the new setup worked beautifully from the start.

One annual cost I hate: road tax charges of £710 or the £372.75p I pay half yearly, which totals £745.50. Fuel consumption is some compensation: using Esso's E5 99 Octane returns 31-33 mpg over 200-mile days, short runs recently offered 28.7 mpg. The insurance rates

obtained through a broker in July 2023 were unchanged changed at a £350 annual premium, despite a £100 fine in Summer 2024, penalty for 35 mph in a 30 mph limit.

Verdict

Despite the rear spring doubts, the TT has become a better drive. Resale values are not as strong as they have been, but for me the 5- year pleasure of useful performance, now augmented with braking, chassis and interior replacements means it will have completed another year with me by the time you read out next instalment. ***—Jeremy Walton***



Jeremy's Useful contacts:

Bilstein *supplies in UK, exceptionally helpful*: www.bilstein-shocks.co.uk

Sachs dampers online: autoparts24 (*via eBay as I could not find supply anywhere else, but a search 6 months later failed to raise them on the web, except via eBay).*

Those powerful ***hatchback struts*** *branded* ANG RONG *came from eBay via auto.toy (Again I could not raise them via the web, except via eBay). They now cost about £2 more at £12.82.*

I remain pleased with the electronic dashboard work of: Cartronix, Waterlloville, Hants. Find them at : www.cartronix.co.uk

My regular garage—who also looked after four BMWs in my care—is Auto Services, Carsons Yard, Warminster: Tel, 01985215749.

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